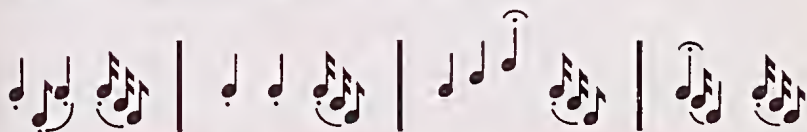


ing for a few minutes, I obtained two brief views of a brown bird with semi-erect wedge-shaped tail.

I then brought my son, Lindsay, from our camp nearby and within a short time we both obtained views of a bird. My own view was particularly satisfactory as the bird was in a very favourable light, and, apparently attracted by my calling, remained in view for perhaps fifteen seconds. My general impression was as before, but I noted, through binoculars, the rich brown, almost chestnut tone of the wings with two or three quills appearing nearly black. Feathers of the nape and mantle appeared light-centred. The bill was dark. I was by that time almost certain that the bird was a Bristle-bird (I had previously encountered the species in Victoria) and looked carefully for the "bristles" surrounding the bill, but these were not discernible.

During these observations, other calls were heard, i.e. (a) a feeding (?) call comprising a muted note oft-repeated, (b) a six syllable call, which I set down as "Ests-per-per (pause) wid-der dit." L.E.S. noting calls at the same time recorded four variants of this call, adding the remarks: "First note, and odd single note, slightly liquid. Sharp, clear tone. Pitch, about that of Spotted Pardalote." His musical notation was as follows:



The habitat of the birds encountered comprised *Agonis* (6-10 ft. high) and *Melaleuca* with *Juncus*, *Ghania* and low shrubs. The area had suffered fire damage at some previous time, but recovery, as indicated by the size of the *Agonis* regrowth, was fairly well advanced. Similar habitat extended over a fairly large area, but was scattered, making the area difficult to assess. A drainage channel traversed the area and the whole was low-lying.

During the morning we examined the area between the track and Lake Gardner, encountering Emu-wrens and Brown Quail in several places. Calls of Bristle-birds extended the observed habitat to an area of c. 180 yards long and c. 80 yards wide, but this was not necessarily comprehensive as similar habitat occurred on the other side of the drainage channel and elsewhere.

—ERIC H. SEDGWICK, Collie.

Varanus semiremex in Western Australia.—The monitor lizard *Varanus semiremex* is but rarely represented in scientific collections and I have never seen a specimen from Western Australia though Glauert (1951: 16) has cited this species as living there. Therefore I reported in my study on the monitor lizards of Australia (1958: 238) that *Varanus semiremex* has never been found outside of Queensland.

To my great surprise I found a fine specimen of *Varanus semiremex* in a collection of reptiles made by Dr. Klaus Immelmann

during his journey in the Kimberleys in Western Australia. This specimen (SMF 57 138) had been caught near Ivanhoe at the Ord River on November 23, 1959. It agrees completely with typical *Varanus semiremex* of Queensland except with regard to its relatively longer tail. The tip of the tail being damaged, the tail is nevertheless 1.78 times as long as the head and body (instead of 1.34-1.60 in specimens from Queensland). The proportion of the distances between the nares and tip of snout and the nares and the eye is 1 : 1.3 (in specimen SMF 53 259 from Woodstock, Queensland, the ratio is 1 : 1.34). There are no well differentiated supraoculars, 51 scutes from left to right angle of mouth counted around the head, 103 scutes around the body, and 84 transverse rows of ventral shields. The ground colour of the upper side is a dark grey with many light grey dots, some of them ocellated with black. The dorsal face of the head shows no pattern except a light dot in the pineal area, the temporal region shows a light longitudinal band. The upper side of the legs is dotted lightly, the dorsal face of the tail unicoloured black. The ventral side of this specimen is whitish with grey cross-bars, these being more distinct in the anterior part of the body. Compared with SMF 53 259 which has no light dorsal dots, the Western Australian specimen seems to retain a more juvenile pattern.

Measurements: head and body, 235 mm.; tail, 420 + ? mm.; fore-leg, 56 mm.; hind-leg, 77 mm.; length of head, 43.2 mm.; breadth of head, 22.5 mm.; height of head, 19.3 mm.; snout, 19.2 mm.; distance nares - tip of snout 7.3 mm.; distance nares - anterior border of eye, 9.5 mm.

With the discovery of *Varanus semiremex* there are now six species of monitor lizards known from the Kimberleys. It can be expected that the area of its distribution covers the northern part of the Northern Territory, too.

Literature cited:

- Glauert, L. 1951. A new *Varanus* from East Kimberley. *West. Austral. Naturalist*, 3: 14-16.
Mertens, R. 1958. Bemerkungen über die Warane Australiens. *Senckenb. biol.*, Frankfurt, 39: 229-264.

—ROBERT MERTENS, Senckenberg Natural History Museum, Frankfurt, a. M.

Display in the Musk Duck.—The following observations were made on a male Musk Duck (*Biziura lobata*) at one of the Perry's Lakes near Reabold Hill on August 28, 1960.

The bird had two distinctive calls, one a hissing whistle and the other a metallic "plonk." Accompanying the calls were distinctive movements of the head, wings and tail which, owing to their being employed in a different sequence for the different calls, can be used to anticipate which call the bird is going to give. The normal "rest" position of the bird appeared to be with the head back over the body, the lobe just touching the surface of the water and the tail at an angle of approximately 30° to the horizontal. When swimming around while feeding, or when disturbed, the body was almost